



WILLIAM T. PECORA AWARD

J. Robert Porter

In recognition of significant long-term sustained contributions to the commercial applications of Earth observations made from space.

In 1969, a man with a dream convinced his friends, family, and colleagues to join him in the commercial application of remote sensing to natural resources management. In 1995, the company he founded to bring substance to his dreams, Earth Satellite Corporation (EarthSat), celebrates its 26th anniversary.

J. Robert Porter is a visionary, dreamer, and indefatigable optimist. Trained as an exploration geologist at Dartmouth College and the graduate school of the University of Oklahoma, he has long understood the importance of advanced technologies and the value of information. In the mid-to-late 1960's, he directed the development of NASA's Earth Resources Technology Satellites (ERTS, later renamed Landsat). He worked with Dr. Pecora and other distinguished scientists who were later honored as recipients of the William T. Pecora Award. During this period, Mr. Porter came to believe in the potential of Earth observing satellites for providing critical resource information to this country and abroad.

In the mid-1970's, Mr. Porter developed CROPCAST, an agricultural commodity forecasting system which relies upon meteorological satellite data and ground observations. For the past 18 years, the CROPCAST system has monitored food production throughout the world. CROPCAST customers have received accurate preharvest estimates for more than 20 commodities. Today, farmers, traders, food processors, and manufacturers receive continuous updates of worldwide food products. More than 100,000 subscribers receive daily CROPCAST agricultural production and agricultural weather data.

During the 1980's, Mr. Porter served as a member of the Space Applications Board of the National Resource Council, the Land Remote Sensing Advisory Committee of the Department of Commerce, and the Geosat Committee. His efforts with these three groups contributed significantly to the continuation of the Landsat program.

Mr. Porter has been a leader in the international development of remote-sensing applications and EarthSat has focused much of its efforts abroad. Large development projects in Africa, Asia, South America, and the Middle East have contributed to the development of remote-sensing technology and to the welfare of the nations in which the projects were conducted.

For his timeless support of public programs and his entrepreneurial zeal, the Department of the Interior and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration are proud to present the 1994 William T. Pecora Award to J. Robert Porter.

Administrator
National Aeronautics
and Space Administration

Secretary
Department of the Interior